



An Act for Regulating the making of Stuffs in Norfolk & Norwich.



Hereas divers Abuses and Deceits have of late years been had and used in the making of Worstedes and other Stuffs, commonly called *Norwich Stuffs*, and in the Reeling of the Yarns whereof the said Stuffs are either wholly or in part made; All which tends to the debasing of the said Manufacture, unto the prejudice of the Publique For prevention of all which Abuses and Deceits, It is Enacted by this present Parliament, That from henceforth there be and shall be a Corporation within the said city and county of *Norwich* and county of *Norfolk*, consisting of Two Presidents, Twelve Wardens, and Forty Assistants: All which are to be Master Weavers within the places aforesaid; and one of the said Presidents, and Six of the said Wardens, and Twenty of the said Assistants, shall be yearly Chosen upon the last Wednesday in the Moneth of *November*, at some publique place, by the Master Weavers, or the greater part of them present, of the city and county of *Norwich*; and the other of the said Presidents, Six Warden, and Twenty Assistants, shall be chosen on the same day in some publique place by the Master Weavers, or the greater part of them present, of the county of *Norfolk*: And the said Twelve Wardens shall within Fourteen days after they shall be so Chosen or Elected, take the Oath ensuing, to be administered to them by the Mayor of *Norwich* for the time being or his Deputy, or any one Justice of the Peace of the county of *Norfolk* for the time being, if he be present, otherwise by the said Mayor or his Deputy onely, which they have hereby power to administer accordingly; (*viz.*) *I A.B. do Swear, That I will well, faithfully and honestly perform and discharge the Office of a Warden of the Corporation of Worsted-Weavers, according to the best of my skill, power and knowledge.* And it is further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the said Presidents, Wardens and Assistants for the time being, shall for ever hereafter in Name and Fact be one Body Politique and Corporate in Law, to all intents and purposes, and shall have a perpetual Succession, and be called by the Name of The Presidents, Wardens and Assistants of the Worsted-Weavers of the City and County of *Norwich* and County of *Norfolk*; and sue or plead, and be sued or impleaded by the Name aforesaid, in all Courts and places of Judicature within this Nation; and by that Name shall and may, without License in Mortmain, purchase, take or receive any Lands, Tenements or Hereditaments of the Gift, Alienation or Demise of any person or persons, who are hereby without further License enabled to transfer the same, and any Goods or Chattels whatsoever, for the use and benefit of the Corporation aforesaid, not exceeding the yearly Value of One thousand pounds. And for the Regulation and good Government of the said Trade and Manufacture, The said Corporation, or any Thirteen or more of them, whereof one President and Seven or more Wardens to be present, shall have hereby Power and Authority from time to time to meet and keep Courts, for the ends in this Act mentioned, within the city of *Norwich*, at such time and place as shall be appointed by the said Presidents or one of them, and Wardens or greater Number of them for the time being, who are hereby Required upon the desire of any Eight or more of the said Assistants at any time to warn and keep a Court accordingly; And the said Corporation, or any Thirteen or more of them, whereof one President and Seven or more Wardens to be present as aforesaid, or the greater number of them, shall have, and hereby have Power and Authority from time to time to make and appoint a Common-Seal, or several Common-Seals for the use of the said Corporation, and to make By-Laws, Rules and Ordinances for and concerning the Regulation of the premises, and of such particulars as shall be by them or the greater number of them, found requisite for the better Regulation of the said Trade and Manufacture, and the due Execution of this Act; which By-Laws, Rules and Ordinances being confirmed and ratified by the Mayor and one Justice of the Peace for the time being of the said city and county of *Norwich*, and two other Justices of the Peace of the said county of *Norfolk*, or the greater number of them, shall be obeyed and kept by the several persons within or under the Government of the said Corporation or Regulation. And for the better Regulation and carrying on of the work aforesaid, and avoiding of all Frauds and Deceits therein, Be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all Yarns called *Worsted-Yarns*, or used by the Worsted-Weavers, shall be made without fraud, and shall before the same be put or offered to sale, be Reeled on a Reel of a full Yard about, every Reel-staff containing Fourteen Lea's, and every Lea containing Forty Thrids, Twelve of those Reel-staves making a Dozen, and Twelve of those Dozens making a Gross: And in case any person or persons shall after the Tenth of *October*, One thousand six hundred and fifty, offer to put to sale any the Yarns aforesaid within the city of *Norwich* and county of *Norfolk*, made and Reeled in any other maner as aforesaid, That then it shall and may be lawful to and for the Presidents, Wardens and Assistants aforesaid, or any two or more of them, to seize, take and carry away all such Yarn as is defective and false as aforesaid; The same to be within Eight days after such Seizure brought into the Common-Hall of the Corporation aforesaid, and within Twenty days after such Seizure, to be brought to a Tryal by a Jury of Twelve honest and able Artificers of the same Regulation, whereof six to be of the city and county of *Norwich*, and other six of the county of *Norfolk*: Which Twelve Artificers the Mayor of the city of *Norwich*, or his Deputy, for the time being, are hereby authorized to Summon and Warn to appear at the *Guildhall* of the said city, at time or times by him to be appointed, and to be Impannelled, and Sworn to enquire of the defects of the said Yarn, contrary to this present Act: Which Oath the said Mayor or his Deputy are hereby authorized to give. And for such and so much Yarn

aforesaid as shall be so found, and presented by the said Jury to be defective, the said Jury shall have, and hereby have power to set and impose such Fine or Fines upon the Owners thereof, as in their discretion shall be thought meet, not exceeding the value of the moyety of such defective Yarns; which said Fines the Owners of the said respective Yarns shall pay unto the Wardens of the said Corporation, or one of them, to and for the use of the Poor of the said Corporation, within Forty days after the same Fine shall be so set; or in default thereof, the said Wardens shall put to sale the said Yarns, rendring the Overplus to be raised by sale thereof, unto the said Owners upon demand. And it is hereby further Enacted and Ordained, That if the said Yarn shall not be presented, and found by a Jury of Twelve men as aforesaid, to be defective as aforesaid, so as the same shall appear to be seized without just cause as aforesaid, That then he or they that shall so seize the same, shall forfeit to the Owner or Owners of the Yarn so seized, the treble value of the Yarn so seized, and three times so much Damages as he or they shall and may sustain by such Seizure, or by means or reason thereof; The same to be adjudged and taxed by the Mayor of the said City of *Normich* for the time being, and be levied by sale of the Offenders Goods, by Warrant under the Hand and Seal of the Mayor of the City of *Normich* for the time being, if such Seizure shall be made within the said City of *Normich* or County of the same; And if such Seizure shall be made within the County of *Norfolk*, The same to be adjudged and taxed by any one or more Justices of the Peace within the said County of *Norfolk*, and to be levied by Warrant under the Hand and Seal of any one or more such Justice or Justices of the Peace of the said County of *Norfolk*. And it is hereby further Enacted, That all sorts of Stuffs, whether wooven of Wooll onely, or of Wooll and other Materials within the City and County of *Normich*, and County of *Norfolk*, or either of them, shall be under the Power, Government and Regulation of the said Corporation, in such maner as by this and other Acts of Parliament, and the By-Laws made and to be made by vertue hereof, are or shall be Established (except such Stuffs as are under the Regulation of the Wardens, and Fellowship of the Mystry of Russel Sattins, Sattins Reverses, and Fustian of *Normich* making, within the said City of *Normich*) And that all Stuffs made or to be made under the Regulation aforesaid, before the same shall be offered or put to sale, shall be brought to some convenient place or places within the said County of the City of *Normich*, and County of *Norfolk*, to be appointed by the said Wardens, or the more part of them, to be viewed and searched by the said Wardens or any two of them; and if the same shall be found to be well and sufficiently made and wrought, according to the Rules and Ordinances of the said Corporation for the time being, Then all such Stuffs shall be by the said Wardens or any two of them, sealed and allowed accordingly, without any Sum of Moneys paid or to be paid for the same: And if upon search or view thereof, any such Stuffs shall be found, and appear to be defective, contrary to the Rules and Ordinances of the said Corporation, Then such defective Stuffs shall be seized by the said Wardens, or any two of them; And shall be from time to time ordered and brought to Tryal, proceeded on and Fined in such maner and form as is in this present Act before limited and appointed for the defective Yarns aforesaid: And if any person shall buy or sell any piece of Stuff made under the Regulation of this Corporation unsealed, and being thereof convicted by his own Confession, or the Oaths of two or more Witnesses, before the Mayor of the said City of *Normich*, or his Deputy, for the time being, or before any Justice of the Peace for the time being for the County of *Norfolk*, who have hereby power to administer an Oath for that purpose, the said person, if he be a Buyer, shall forfeit for every piece of Stuff so brought unsealed, Four shillings; and if a Seller, for every piece so sold, shall forfeit other Four shillings, to the use of the Corporation aforesaid: And if any person counterfeit any Seal of the said Wardens, or Seal any piece of Stuff with any Seal as shall be counterfeited, Every person so offending and being thereof convicted as aforesaid, shall forfeit the Sum of Twenty pounds, to and for the use of the Poor of the said Corporation: which said Penalties and Forfeitures respectively, shall be levied by sale of the Goods and Chattels of the Offender or Offenders, by warrant to be granted from the said Mayor or Justice of Peace respectively, before whom such Conviction shall be; and for default of Goods and Chattels whereon to levy the said Forfeiture of Twenty pounds, the party so offending shall suffer Six Moneths Imprisonment, without Bail or Mainprize. And the said Presidents, Wardens and Assistants, or any two or more of them, shall have, and hereby have power to enter into the House and Work-house of any Artificer within the said City of *Normich* and County of *Norfolk*, under the Regulation of the said Corporation, at all times of the day, and usual times of working and opening of Shops; and into the Shops, Houses and Ware-houses of any Merchant, common Buyer, Dealer in, and Retailer of any the said Stuffs; and into the Houses or Work-houses of any Dyer, Sheerman, Calender, and all other Workmens houses and places of sale or dressing of the said Stuffs, or selling of Yarns, and may there search and view the Yarn and Stuffs respectively, whether they be ordered and made according to the Laws, Orders and Ordinances of the said Trade: And if any Stuff or Materials aforesaid shall be found faulty or defective, to seize, take and carry away the same, to be ordered, brought to Tryal, and proceeded in maner and form as is before in this Act mentioned and appointed for defective Yarns and Stuffs. And all Mayors, Justices, Sheriffs, Bailiffs, Constables and Officers, shall be ayding and assisting to the said Presidents, Wardens and Assistants, or any of them, as often as they shall be thereunto required: And in all Actions or Suits that shall be brought against any person or persons, for any acting according to the true intent and meaning of this Act, That such person or persons shall or may plead the General Issue of *Not-guilty*, and give the special Matter in Evidence; And shall recover double costs, if the Verdict pass for him and them, or that the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs be Non-suited. Provided always, That this Act, nor any thing therein contained, shall not be prejudicial or hurtful to the Weavers of the Towns of *Great-Yarmouth* and *Lyn* in the said County of *Norfolk*, or either of them, to deprive them or either of them of such Liberties or Priviledges as are granted unto them by an Act of Parliament made in the Fourteenth year of the Reign of King *Henry* the Eighth, or by any other Act of Parliament whatsoever. Provided, That this Act shall continue for the space of Three years from the First of *November*, One thousand six hundred and fifty, and no longer.

Die Jovis, 14 Novembr. 1650.

Ordered by the Parliament, That this Act be forthwith printed and published.

Hen: Scobell, Cleric. Parliamenti.

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